

pockets if they would take time to read the following statement, which we find in the *New York Bulletin*, of what \$198 a year put into an old line company has accomplished :

"In the year 1843, nearly forty-two years ago, a young man who is now one of the most prominent and influential citizens of New York, one of the wealthiest men in this country and also one of the most noted and enterprising financiers in the world, took out in the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York a policy of \$10,000 upon which the annual premium to be paid for life was \$198. This premium has been paid every year in full, and the dividends declared by the company have always been applied to increasing the amount of the insurance by reversionary additions to the policy—that is, each dividend declared in cash was used to buy new insurance paid up by a single premium of the amount of the cash dividend. At the anniversary of the policy, December 16, 1883, the amount of the additions in force was \$16,371—making, with the original \$10,000, the sum now insured \$26,371, payable at death. The total premiums paid, namely, \$198 a year for forty-two years, amount to \$8,316; so that, if the party assured had died in 1884, prior to December 16, the company would have paid his estate, or the beneficiaries named in the policy, the \$10,000 originally assured in 1843 and have returned all the premiums paid (\$8,316) and also the further sum of \$8,055—altogether, \$18,055 more than the amount of premiums paid by the holder of the policy."

In the face of this example (and we could give a dozen more examples) of the benefits to be derived from life insurance in a first-class company and on a desirable and equitable old-line plan.

The *Bulletin* is justified in asking: "What kind of a showing can co-operative, assessment-after-death insurance (so-called) make by way of honest competition or respectable comparison?"

—The recent discussion of the St John Board of Trade contains little of a practical character. The request that the government should take steps to secure commercial treaties with Spain and the United States and some arrangement with the British West Indies, as an expression of opinion, was a proper and natural, in a commercial organ. To place undue stress on the need for such treaties could not possibly do any good and might do harm. If you want to make a bargain with a man you do not commence by telling him that it is a matter of life and death with you; and in an international question it is not less indiscreet to give away your case. The Board, however, cannot be accused of indiscretion, and it has not allowed itself to be made responsible for the opinions of individuals which it was not prepared to endorse. It has, however, declared that New Brunswick has been disappointed with confederation, and that general discontent prevails. The precise cause of the disappointment or the source of the discontent is not given. It consists no doubt in the languid condition of trade, for which a remedy is desirable. New Brunswick need not be afraid that Ontario would object to reciprocity treaties, if they could be got on fair terms; but all such arrangements depend upon the agreement of two parties. The other parties to the proposed arrangements must be heard from.

—The debt of the city of Quebec, \$3,079,090, is a heavy weight about the necks of the citizens. The money was borrowed in England, all except £45,000, which bears five, at six per cent. *Le Comptoir d'Escompte*, of France, proposes to take over this debt at 5½. Under the proposed arrangement the city would have to pay \$190,533.33 against \$183,458.40 which it now pays. The city treasurer, M. Lefrance, objects to the terms as too onerous. It would be difficult for the city to pay \$16,074.93 a year more than it pays at present, a sum which capitalized, amounts to \$728,762.87. The sum of \$9,266.11 at five per cent. would extinguish the debt in sixty years. The Treasurer thinks it would be possible to exchange the present debt for one bearing four per cent., by which operation there would be a gain of \$3,000 a year. The conversion would not be without its difficulties: these would be all the greater from the fact that the contribution to the Sinking Fund is not regularly made. To this fund the contribution is \$50,000 a year, ranging from one to two and a half on the debt. This payment the Treasurer says it is utterly impossible for the city to meet; but objection to non-payment is not so easily removed as he supposes. Any thing that would lighten the burden would be a god-send to the city.

—Many of the Canadians who, in the days when Minnesota and Dakota enjoyed greater railway facilities than the youthful Province of Manitoba, abjured their status as British subjects in order to be in a position to claim homesteads under the laws of the United States, have now good reason to repent having sacrificed their nationality. The following quotation is from the *St. Vincent New Era*, published in Minnesota, about three miles south of the international boundary:

"On Tuesday last we saw a sight upon our streets, that with little variation can be witnessed here any day. A number of our best farmers were in town, men we have known since the settled here, and known them to be sober, hard-working, intelligent, honest men. They had their wagons loaded with wheat and the prices they were offered ranged between 27 and 37 cents per bushel, mostly 27 cents. After taking out the cost of threshing, and twine they were paid less for their wheat than the railway charges are for drawing it to market. Some took their wheat to Traill's mill, and traded it off for flour. Some took it to Emerson, Manitoba, and paid the duty and sold it there, others took it home again, and a few, disheartened, sold their loads for what they could get, not what it was worth, and all felt like cursing the country and getting out of it."

—Exports to West Indies from Canada, fiscal year 1882-3 were, in value, \$3,125,031 while the imports were valued at \$4,369,260. Of our exports to the British, French, Spanish, and Danish West Indies, \$2,361,699 worth was products of our fisheries; \$413,203, of the forest; the remainder, with the exception of \$70,000 manufactured and miscellaneous goods, consisted of animals and dairy produce or of field products. The export of New Brunswick thither amounted to only \$106,000. Nova Scotia sent \$2,855,000 worth, mainly fish. Quebec, about \$43,000 worth. Ontario, animals and manufactured goods to the value of \$13,400.

—A transposition of the types in last week's *MONETARY TIMES*, confused what was intended to be conveyed with respect to a point in the criticism of the Trust & Loan Company's statement, page 641. The last sentence but one should read: "One of the serious drawbacks under which this company labors is that while the rate of interest it pays on debentures is 4½ per cent., it receives on its reserve fund, which is invested in special securities, only 3½." The point sought to be made is that their money should be more profitably invested. The report shows that the company has \$418,500 in bank or on short loans, earning not over 3 per cent., and \$671,500 in special securities, at 3½ per cent., making over a million of dollars unprofitably invested.

—It is understood that the \$10,000,000 of bonds which the Canadian Pacific Co. proposes to issue on the Ontario and Quebec railway have not yet been taken; but some well informed persons are of opinion that they will shortly be placed. It is probable that the company has obtained an advance on some of its securities. The statement is confidently made that the Lachine bridge and the cut-off at Smith's Falls will at once be built. The bridge is a necessity and must be built sooner or later.

INSOLVENCY LEGISLATION vs. COMMERCIAL INSURANCE.

(COMMUNICATED.)

Repeated attempts have been made in Canada and the United States, without success, to procure the enactment of Bankrupt Laws, or of laws for the *pro rata* distribution of the assets of insolvents, and there are general outcries, both on this side the Atlantic and in Europe, concerning the preferential assignments which are so often made to the detriment of general creditors. We complain that we are too much governed, and yet, whenever any difficulty occurs, we call upon "The Government" to help us, instead of considering whether the proper remedy is not in our own hands, and whether the remedy we ask of the Government is not one which will increase the evil.

If we would lessen the number of insolvents we must study carefully the causes of insolvency; if we would not lose by insolvencies we must either avoid the causes or insure ourselves against their effects; but, if we have a bankrupt law, and depending upon it for partial indemnity, continue to sell goods on credit to doubtful persons, we practically charge every one of our customers an insurance premium to indemnify us against losses by insolvencies. Because, suppose we, by its means, collect fifty per cent. of the amount of an indebtedness which represents five per cent. of our gross sales to the insolvent, we protect ourselves against general loss on our business by an extra charge of two and a half per cent. upon our sales to the prospective insolvent; or, if the gross amounts of such debts, compounded at this rate, do not exceed one per cent. of our gross sales, we can afford to let him off more lightly by adding one per cent. to our price lists and foregoing this advance to those customers of whose financial standing there is no doubt, if their purchases re-